

Ecclesmachan & Threemiletown Community Council - Newsletter

Winter 2015



Volume 1, Issue 7

“Carpe Diem”



Local Development Plan

In 2012 the Community Council hosted a public meeting to discuss the “Call for Sites” for a new Local Development Plan with representatives from Planning present. After the meeting a questionnaire was filled out by those present and submitted to the Council as local opinion. We would like to thank everyone who attended and completed the questionnaire as this enabled us to present a clear and balanced view from the community.

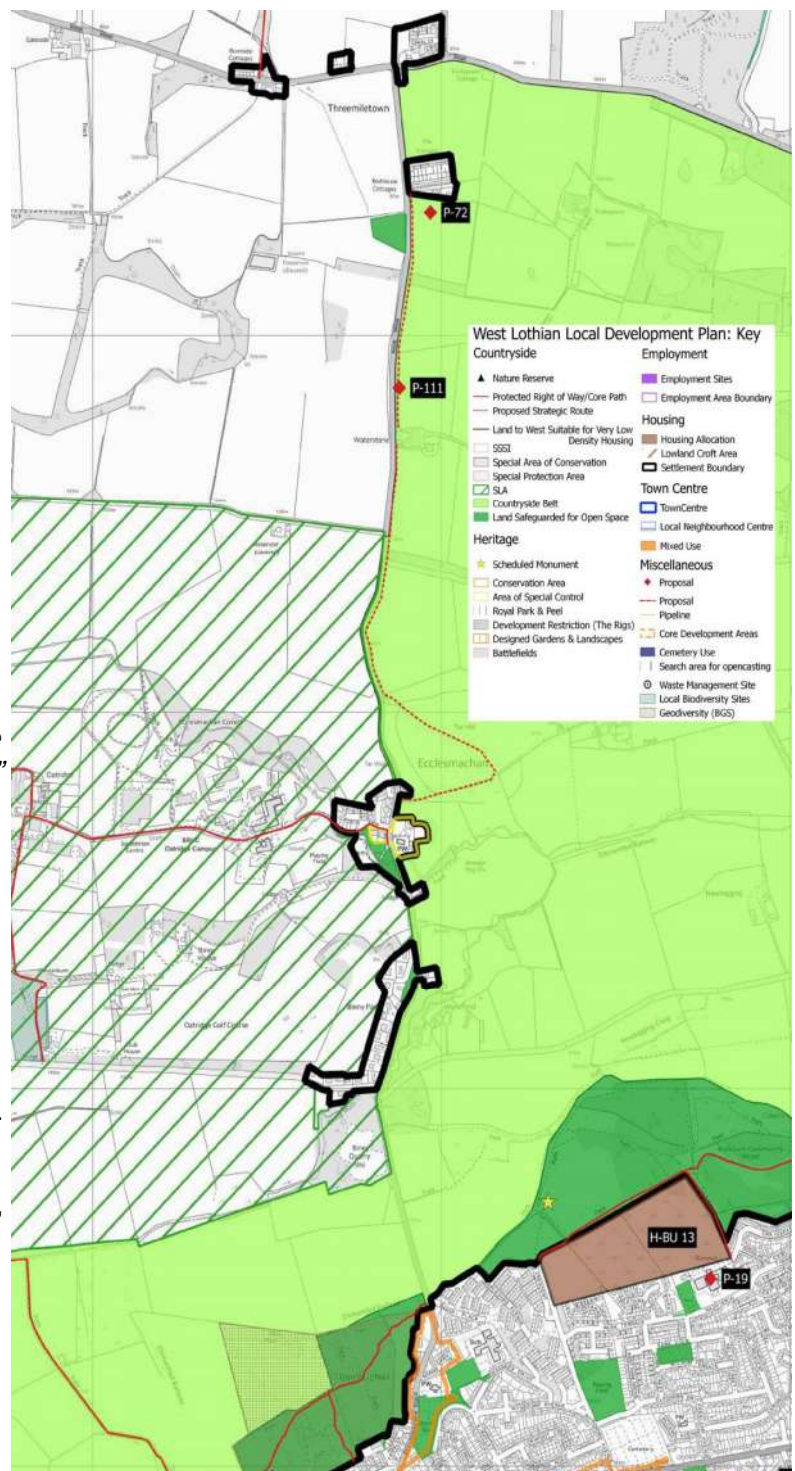
The proposed document for the West Lothian Local Development Plan was approved to progress to the consultation stage by the Council Executive on 15th September 2015. This plan will set the development strategy for West Lothian forward to 2024 and will eventually replace the current West Lothian Local Plan.

It is noted that none of the sites in either village proposed in the “Call for Sites” has been approved for inclusion in the plan. For Ecclesmachan there is simply a statement “*There are no development proposals for this settlement*” and for Threemiletown the only development referred to is the play facilities. There is also a mention of an approved proposal (under landward schemes) for “a cycle route at B8046 Ecclesmachan to Threemiletown”, (Reference P-111 on page 115 of the document “[V3 Proposed Plan](#)”). This in fact is from the study commissioned by the Community Council which is now almost complete; the timescale scheduled for this proposed project is stated as 2014 - 2019.

Looking at Uphall in reference to proposals from the Call for Sites that would affect Ecclesmachan, these also have been almost completely excluded as part of the proposed plan. There is a slight enlargement on the south side of Broxburn and Uphall but not nearly as much as we feared.

The full draft plan can be viewed online at the following URL:-

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/proposedplan>



Local Paths Projects

Countryside Paths.

Since completing our rather ambitious countryside paths project in 2011 we have continued to maintain the three local paths we “adopted.” If you are able to help with this maintenance we would be glad of some assistance, the work ranges from strimming long grass to trimming back bramble shoots and from clearing ditches to applying wood preservative. You can download a copy of a volunteer form from the web address shown below, simply fill out and drop off at the village hall marked for the attention of the Community Council.

Download from http://www.ecclesmachan.org.uk/documents/paths_volunteersheet_2012.doc

OR contact us by email via: <http://www.ecclesmachan.org.uk/cont.htm>

Linking the Villages.

Following feedback given at two separate public meetings we have now embarked on a much larger project looking into the feasibility of a multi-use path between Ecclesmachan and Threemiletown. In 2014 we applied to the Villages Improvement Fund for a grant to commission a formal feasibility study and were successful in being awarded the funding required.

From Threemiletown off-road pavement access is available providing links east to Winchburgh, Kirkliston, South Queensferry and Fife, and west to Linlithgow and beyond. There is also access to the core path at Burnside leading to the Union Canal towpath. On reaching Ecclesmachan, off-road pavement access is available, providing links to Uphall and Broxburn, and onto Uphall Station, Pumpherston, Livingston, Bathgate or Edinburgh. A link path in this location would provide a useful connection between two existing (and extensive) path networks as well as making the journey between the villages a much safer experience.

Following some background work such as a residents questionnaire (to which we had a great response), initial discussions with landowners and local traffic/accident analysis, we then chose Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT) to carry out the formal study. The questionnaire results were as follows:-

The questionnaire posed 4 questions:

- 1. Do you agree that the B8046 between Ecclesmachan and Threemiletown is currently unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders to use? (Agree/No opinion/Disagree)*
 - 2. Do you agree that the proposed path has the potential to be beneficial to the local community and visitors to the area? (Agree/No opinion/Disagree)*
 - 3. If this path was in place would you use it? (Yes/Not sure/No)*
 - 4. If you would use it, what activity would you use it for? (Walking/Cycling/Horse Riding)*
- Additional comments were also recorded at the end of the questionnaire.*

Collated Results

1.	Agree	100	No opinion	1	Disagree	0
2.	Agree	97	No opinion	4	Disagree	0
3.	Yes	88	Not sure	11	No	2
4.	Walking	93	Cycling	45	Horse Riding	1

Work on the study commenced in December 2014 with an in-depth desktop and site survey, this was followed up in 2015 with detailed landowners discussions and meetings with West Lothian Council investigating future adoption of the potential route.

CSGNT had estimated the potential cost of an active travel route on the west of the B8046, prior to detailed landowner discussions, using information acquired during the feasibility study. This was calculated on the basis of a route approximately 2.1km long and 2m wide finished with a sealed surface. Costs were estimated to be ~£290,000. A potential route on the western side of the B8046 was, however, discounted following the response from one of the landowners.

From the final study report (due to be published at the end of December) final estimates for a path using only the eastern side of the route have been calculated at ~£318,000. The project costs are dependent on the results of a topographical survey which has not been undertaken as part of this study. The topographical survey would be required prior to further project development and detailed designs being worked up.

Again from the final study report, potentially an active travel route is possible on the ground, would be granted landowner consent (subject to conditions) and would be adopted by West Lothian Council (subject to certain conditions and issues being agreed) if located on the eastern side of the B8046. Physical implementation of a route is, however, subject to the project being fully funded, with any other necessary consents also being obtained. It is noted that the route identified has now been included in the draft West Lothian Local Development Plan as a future potential project. Discussions to take this project further are ongoing.



Village Flower Displays - Community Projects

The Community Council have been working on another project recently where we hope to install self-watering flower planters and also carry out some roadside verge planting. Having taken advice from local landscape designers and growers we decided on a two tier approach handled as two separate parts:-

1. Self watering formal planters at strategic points filled with bedding plants (positions where secure).
2. Broadleaved weed treatment and mixed bulb planting on five verge areas (bulb life expired before council flail).

With assistance from Oatridge College we were awarded a Community Chest grant for funding projects that will benefit the Community or enhance the area we live in, this will fund the first stage. For the second stage we hope to get funding from the Villages Improvement Fund.

The verge work should look after itself once everything is in place and the Council grass-cutting will continue as normal in the summer months keeping things tidy. To ensure the planters go ahead we will need some assistance from residents through volunteering to look after one particular item and work on it twice a year, attending to planting and tidying. If you can help us make this happen then please contact us (see page 2).



High Speed Broadband

There are two telephone exchanges serving the villages, one covering Ecclesmachan (Broxburn) and the other for Threemiletown (Philpstoun).

Some preparatory investigation work has been carried out in Threemiletown and it is envisaged that at least one of three telephone cabinets for fibre optic cabling covering this area and Philpstoun will go live sometime between January and June 2016.

In Ecclesmachan the telephone lines are Exchange Only lines (not routed through the green street cabinets), these involve a more complicated process and therefore will be tackled during the latter stages of the roll-out sometime in the second half of 2017.

Public Park Upgrades

West Lothian Council have completed their studies regarding Threemiletown and decided to upgrade the facilities in the existing location. They are proposing to install new play equipment on the west side of the park so that it's further from the main road, the allocated budget is £60,000.

A public consultation will take place early 2016 involving local schools, the Community Council and local residents – an information sheet will be delivered to homes by the Community Council Jan/Feb 2016.

The park in Ecclesmachan has now also been scheduled for a redesign / equipment upgrade, this will take place within the 2017/2018 budget year. Again the budget allocated for the works is £60,000.

Events Information

Mother and Toddlers Group

The mother and toddlers group meet in the village hall on a Wednesday morning 9:30 - 11am. Mums (dads, nannies etc. are welcome too!), babies and toddlers are all welcome to join this small friendly group.

Hall Management Committee

As well as the day to day administration of the village hall, the Management Committee organise various community fundraising events.

The hall can also be hired for private functions etc. Contact Katrena on 01506 857570 or visit the website at www.ecclesmachan.org.uk/vhall for more details.

S.W.R.I. Ecclesmachan Institute

Meet on the first Thursday of each month from September until June (no meeting in January) in the village hall at 7:15pm. For further information contact Marion Meldrum on 01506 852562

Children's Christmas Party 2015.

This years Children's Christmas Party, (organised by the Gala Committee), will be held in the Village Hall on Friday 11th December 5:30 - 7:30pm



Weblinks:

www.ecclesmachan.org.uk
www.pathsforall.org.uk
www.csgnt.org.uk
www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

 We wish you all a very, very, merry, Christmas 